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## THE MELIKS OF EASTERN ARMENIA III

Although the meliks of Siwnik' are not as well known as those of Karabagh, our examination of the meliks in previous studies<sup>1</sup> has served to clarify somewhat the picture in the former region and has revealed a situation less vague and confusing than once supposed. Basically, there seem to have been only four important melikdoms in the whole of Siwnik': Sisian, Lap'an, Tat'ew and Kašatał. Gełark'unik', lying north of these, appears to have contained several small melikdoms rather than forming a single one of its own<sup>2</sup>.

A description of these melikdoms in Siwnik' may best begin with a continuation of our survey of the topographical history of the region which we ended in our previous study with the fall of the Haykid dynasty of Siwnik' in the twelfth century<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Robert H. Hewsen, «The Meliks of Eastern Armenia, A Preliminary Study REA N.S., tome IX (1972), 255-329 and «The Meliks of Eastern Armenia II REA N.S., tome X (1973). In my preliminary study I referred to the House of Siwnik' without further qualification and this was fortunate for our knowledge of the various dynasties which held this principality has been recently increased by Toumanoff and this requires that their enumeration be reexamined. In his *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Washington, 1963), p. 214, Toumanoff cites three Siwnid dynasties: 1) the Haykids, 2) the House of Gardman-Albania, itself a Haykid-Siwnid branch, and 3) the Liparitids or Orbeliani, a branch of the Mamikonids. Now that we know, thanks to Toumanoff, that the Sennacherib who inherited the Siwnid throne through his adoption by Gregory III c. 1084 was not John Sennacherib of the House of Gardman-Albania but rather a prince of the Aranšahikid House of Balk' (a ramification of the ancient Aranšahikid royal House of Albania), then this introduces another dynasty into Siwnid history. The Aranšahikids of Balk' as we have seen (Hewsen, «Meliks II»), held the Siwnid inheritance, or what was left of it, until c. 1291. Meanwhile, as we shall see in this present study, the Liparitid-Orbeleans had been gradually acquiring the rest of Siwnik' from the Muslims with Georgian support. Thus, while there were, indeed, three Siwnid dynasties, they must now be considered to have been the following: 1) The Haykids, who ruled from time immemorial in one branch or another until c. 1166, 2) the Aranšahikids from c. 1166 to (in Balk') c. 1291, and 3) the Liparitid-Orbelids, from c. 1200 to 1437 (and in Sisian, at least) to c. 1828.

<sup>2</sup> Between Gełark'unik' and Sisian and extending towards the west was a large stretch of mountainous country in which lay the basin of the Arp'a River and its tributaries, i.e. the region of Daralagiaz (Vayoc'jor and Elegnajor). Although originally the territory of the Halbakids, these regions had apparently been lost to the Muslims at an early date for we hear of no Meliks residing there.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Cyril Toumanoff late of Georgetown University for this



## I. TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

According to the anonymous seventh century Armenian *Geography* (*Ašxarhac'oyc'*), Siwnik' was comprised of twelve districts <sup>4</sup>. We are fortunate, however, in possessing two additional lists of its districts preserved in the text of Stephen Orbelean which give us some idea of the changes which had taken place in the subdivisions of the principality by the thirteenth century <sup>5</sup>. All of these districts are clearly defined by the mountains and valleys of Siwnik' and, not only their location, but even their approximate areas are readily determined. Besides these three lists, we have what is, in effect, a fourth list contained in the letter of Israel Ori to the Elector Palastine dated October 22, 1699 <sup>6</sup>. From these four lists it is thus possible to draw up the following chart which gives a concordance of their changing names and areas. This will enable us to keep their locations in mind as we pursue our dynastic survey.

## II. THE LIPARITID-ORBELID DYNASTY

1. *The Orbelids of Siwnik'*

The kingdom of Siwnik' came to an end with the death of Gregory IV (c. 1105/24-c. 1166) of the Aranšahikid dynasty after which most of his territory passed to the Muslims. What was left of his kingdom — possibly as little as the district of Bałk' — passed to one of his surviving brothers, Smbat or Sevada, and in 1261 we hear of the daughter of a certain unnamed « King of Bałk' » who was probably a grandson of one of these two brothers and the last of his line. In

survey of the territorial distribution of the Siwnid lands during the Liparitid-Orbelid period (letter dated 25 Oct. 1973).

<sup>4</sup> For the short recension of this geographical work of Saint-Martin, *Mémoires historiques et géographiques sur l'Arménie II* (Paris, 1819) and more recently but less accessible Abrahamyan's edition in his *Anania Širakac'u matenadrutiwnə* (Erevan, 1944). For the long, cf. A. Soukry, *Géographie de Moïse de Chorène d'après Ptolémée* (Venice, 1881). For a discussion of its date and authorship cf. Robert H. Hewsen, « On the Date and Authorship of the *Ašxarhac'oyc'* », *REA N.S.*, tome IV (1967), 409-432.

<sup>5</sup> Step'annos Orbēlian, *Patmut'iwn nahangin Sisakan* (History of the State of Siwnik'), ed. K. Šahnazarian (Paris, 1859).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. G. A. Ezov, *Snošeniya Petra Velikogo s armyanskim narodom* (St. Petersburg, 1898), Doc. no. 9, pp. 35-36.



any case, it was as a result of the decline of this Aranšahikid house that the rest of Siwnik' came to pass into the hands of its next dynasty, that of the Liparitid-Orbeleans, an Armeno-Georgian house of Mamikonid origin which had settled in Georgia c. 876 <sup>7</sup>.

The Liparitid-Orbeleans returned to Armenia from Georgia c. 1177 (or possibly even earlier) and, c. 1200 Ēlikum I of this house received the Siwnid districts of Čahuk and Ernĵak from the Atabeg of Azerbaidzhan <sup>8</sup>. His son, Liparit VII/I <sup>9</sup>, also received Čahuk from the Atabeg in his father's lifetime while the Georgians granted him Hraškaberđ in Čahuk as well as additional domains elsewhere. In 1202, Liparit aided the armies of the dynamic Queen T'amar of Georgia in overrunning Siwnik' and, in return for this was granted the districts of Orotn and Bargiwšat. Still later, the «Queen of Queens» made Liparit ruler of nearly all of Siwnik' except for Vayoc' Jor. (The latter district she granted at the same time to Vasak the Brave of the Xalbakids, who were possibly a branch of the Haykid dynasty of Siwnik').

This new Siwnid state was inherited by Ēlikum II (†1243) who, in 1236, obtained from the Mongol invaders Vayoc' Jor and Eġegis as well. Thus, Ēlikum must have been ruler of the entire principality save for Baġk', which, as we have just seen, remained in Aranšahikid hands as late as 1261. The center of Ēlikum's principality was the district of Čluk and this possibly remained with his dynasty to the end for the village of Angelakot is located in Čluk and, as we shall see, there were Orbelid meliks residing there when the Russians occupied the region in 1828.

<sup>7</sup> On the Mamikonid origin of the Liparitid-Orbeleans cf. Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Washington, 1963), 210, 270.

<sup>8</sup> The end of the twelfth century saw the beginning of a period of decadence and disintegration among the Muslims of Caucasia and Asia Minor. In Azerbaidzhan there was civil war between the grandsons of the Atabeg Ildiguz, and Queen T'amar undertook her first campaign against the infidels to aid her relative the Širwansah Aġsartan who was waging an unsuccessful struggle against Usbeg, one of these princes. In 1203 the Georgians defeated Usbeg and captured Šamxor, Ganja and Dwin, three of the most important cities of the region. In 1205, war broke out between the Georgians and the Seljuk Sultan of Kars and, in 1209, this fortress fell into Georgian hands as well. These conquests, together with the acquisition of Siwnik', left T'amar the mistress of a pan-Caucasian state of formidable proportions. It is within this context that the rise of the Orbelids in Siwnik' must be viewed.

<sup>9</sup> Liparit was the seventh Orbelid with this name but the first to be Prince of Siwnik'.



*The Districts (gawark') of Siwnik \**

Anonymous Ašxarhac'oyc' (Seventh century)	SO II, III (Thirteenth century)	SO LXXIV	1699	Today (Raion names)
1. Gelark'unik'	Gelark'uni	Gelark'uni	Gelark'unik'	Kamo Martuni
2. Sawdk' (Zaw(d)ē/k'/)	Sot'k'	Adic' (?)	Sot'k'	Basargeč'ar
3. Vayoc' Jor (Elegnajor)	Vayoc' Jor (Elegis)	Vayoc' Jor	Daralakiaz	Norasen Azibekov Elegnajor
4. Čahuk	Čahuk Jor or Sahapon	Čahuk		Šahbuz Šahbuz
5. Ernĵak	—	Ernĵak		Julfa
6. Jork'	Jork' (Kapan)	Kapan	Kapan	Łap'an
7. Arewik	Arewik' (Taštem and Melri)	Melri		Melri
8. Kavsakan	Kavsakan	Hovsakan	(C'ovundur)* (S. Bargiwšat)*	Łap'an Łap'an
9. Balk'	Balk' (Ajen)	Balk' (Kašunik)	(N. Bargiwšat)*	Łap'an
10. Haband	Haband	Hamband	(Cagejor)*	S. Goris
11. Čluk	Čluk	Čluk	Sisian	Sisian
12. Ałahēčk'	Ałahēč (Kašatał)	Ałahēč (Xojoraberd)	Kašatał	N. Goris  Lač'in

\* These districts are not mentioned by name in the Letter of the Meliks to the Pope in 1699 but these were the names used at that time for the earlier corresponding toponyms.

Ēlikum II was succeeded by his brother Smbat II (1243-73) who called himself « King of Siwnik' ». Smbat received from the conquering Mongols Orotn, Ełegis, Vayoc' Jor, Urts, Vedi (?) and other lands

besides <sup>10</sup>. Since most of these districts had already belonged to his father, however, we must assume that his «receiving» of them must have meant simply that he had been confirmed by the Mongols in the holding of his father's possessions as was the Mongol custom (e.g. in Russia).

Smbat II was succeeded by his brother Tarsayič' (1273-90) who had already held Orotn in his brother's lifetime but who inherited the entire family domain upon his brother's death. Tarsayič' was succeeded by his son Ēlikum III (1290-1300), whose brother Hasan then became Prince of Orotn. From this it appears that Orotn must have been an appanage of the Siwnid house reserved for the heir during his predecessor's lifetime.

Biwrt'ēl (son of Ēlikum III), his son Bešken I and his grandson Biwrt'ēl II seem to have succeeded one another as Prince of Siwnik' but without Orotn, where we find Hasan, brother of Ēlikum III, then Hasan's son John, and then Smbat, brother of Biwrt'ēl II, as sovereign princes. Gugun, another brother of Biwrt'ēl II, was also appanaged as Prince of Eġegis. It would appear from all this that the reigning Orbelid Prince of Siwnik' kept complete control of his principality merely appanaging certain districts to his younger brother. This was contrary to the practice of the princes of the Haykid dynasty who preceded them. The Haykids had actually subdivided the principality between the various princes of the house who then ruled conjointly in their respective districts <sup>11</sup>.

Biwrt'ēl II was succeeded by his brother Smbat III (1407-1421) and he by his son Bēšk'en II (1421-1437). Before becoming Prince of Siwnik' the latter received from Georgia the fief of Lori in 1412,

<sup>10</sup> The Mongols reached Caucasia in 1220 and defeated King George Laša and his feudal Georgian calvary in a disastrous encounter at Xunani. After turning back to Iran, the Mongols again invaded Caucasia in 1222. Somxit'i and Širwan were devastated, and soon after the succession of George's sister Rusudan in 1223, the Georgians suffered a fearsome attack by the Turkoman Khwarazm-shah, Jalul-ul-din, who defeated them at Ga'ni in 1225, devastated the country as far as Ganja and ultimately sacked Tiflis, itself. A Georgian attempt to turn back the Turkomans met with a rout in 1228 and for six years Georgia was ravaged by them. The third and last Mongol invasion occurred in 1236. The Queen fled to Kutais but the leading members of the nobility accepted Mongol suzerainty and in 1243 Rusudan followed suit. Mongol domination of Georgia and Armenia endured until c. 1300. The Orbelids were among the Georgian nobles who acquiesced to Mongol rule.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Hewsén, «Meliks II».



perhaps on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter Dulanuxt to the future King Alexander I (1417-1442) the previous year. It was perhaps at the same time that his father, Smbat III, received Up'lis C'ixē in Georgia of which he was also prince.

In 1437 Bēšk'en II and his son Rustam fled from Siwnik' to Lori after the defeat of Iskander, the chief of the Black Sheep Turkomans (Qara-Qoyunlu), by the Timurid Shah-Rukh, who, according to Thomas of Mecop, despoiled Bēšk'en of his principality. Some scions of the house survived in the central district of Čluk, however, and it may very well have been Jehan Shah of the Black Sheep who established them as Meliks of Sisian (the earlier Čluk) just as he established the melik dynasties elsewhere in Eastern Armenia.

## 2. *The Tangian Meliks of Sisian*

Although dispossessed of Siwnik' by the Mongols sometime before his death in 1437/8, Bēšk'en II appears as Prince of Angelakot' as early as 1428 and his being called « of Angelakot' » rather than « of Siwnik' » may mean that he had been allowed to keep this village and its surrounding district under Timurid overlordship. A similar case to this was the the earliest Mongol reduction of the Bagratids of Lori to possession of but a single castle.

Now Angeakot' and the nearby village of Bīnakot' were alternate seats of the House of Melik-Tangian, dynasty of the melikdom called Angelakot' or Sisian. Raffi refers to this house as the "Orbelians in Sisian" and it would appear, then, that the House of Melik-Tangian was of Orbelid rather than of Haykid origin and that it represented a survival of the Orbelid dynasty of Siwnik' just as the melik houses of Karabagh represented survivals of the earlier Haykid dynasty of the same principality.

United State Air Force maps of the region of Siwnik' show with great clarity the configuration of its mountains and river valleys. Thus, with our knowledge of the villages in which the various meliks resided, it is not difficult to calculate the general extent of their melikdoms<sup>12</sup>. Accordingly, we may determine the holdings of the various meliks of this region with some degree of exactness even though no specific information on this subject has come to light. Specifically, the territory of the Melikdom of Sisian still forms a

<sup>12</sup> *USAF Pilotage Charts* 325 D, 339 A and 340 B (St. Louis, 1951), scale 1:1,000,000.



*raion* called *Sisian* in Soviet Armenia and obviously corresponded to the earlier district of Čluk. This district occupied the upper course of the Orotan River and is bounded on east and west by two branches of the Zangezur (Siwnik') mountains which join to enclose the district on the north. Its area would have comprised some 1950 sq. kms.

### III. THE HALBAKIDS OR XALBAKIDS

One of the most important houses of Siwnik' in the late Middle Ages was that of the Xalbakids or Halbakids and their Prošid offshoot. As stated in my first study, the Israelid Meliks of Jraberd were unquestionably descended from the earlier House of the Halbakids<sup>14</sup>. Contrary to Barxudaryan's view, that all the meliks were of « Vaxtankean descent »<sup>15</sup> however, this cannot be true of the Israelids for the earliest members of the Halbakids family antedate both of the Vaxtanks of Xaç'en, while the first Halbak (or Xalbak) claimed descent from a certain Bat (or Bak) who is said to have been a « Prince of Xaç'en » in the fifth century.

Despite these two points, I remain inclined to accept a Siwnid descent for the Halbakid House. For one thing, enough lacunae exist in our knowledge of the stemma of the Haykid House of Siwnik' and its branches for the connecting links between this house and that of the Halbakids to have existed without their being known to us. Then, as far as a Prince of Xaç'en having flourished in the fifth century is concerned, there is no mention of any such district prior to the ninth century<sup>16</sup> and no reference anywhere to any princes of Arc'ax<sup>17</sup>, the earliest name for this region. Finally, the earliest

<sup>13</sup> S. T. Eremyan, *Hayastana est « Ašxarhac'oyc' »-i* (Erevan, 1963), 117.

<sup>14</sup> Hewsén, *Meliks Preliminary*, 323-324.

<sup>15</sup> Received from the late scholar in an interview on June 24, 1969, a few months before his death.

<sup>16</sup> The chief source for this part of Armenia is the *History of the Caucasian Albanians* by Moses Dasxuranc'i (Kałankatuac'i) Engl. transl. C. J. F. Dowsett (London, 1961). Compiled over a period extending from the seventh through the twelfth century, this work makes only one mention of Xaç'en in reference to events of 822 (III. 22) but otherwise uses the earlier term Arc'ax.

<sup>17</sup> C. Toumanoff in his *Studies* has made an exhaustive study of the princely houses of ancient and medieval Armenia and has found no trace of any princes of Arc'ax, who, had they existed in the Vth century, would unquestionably have been known to the Armenian historians of the time.



Prince of Xaç'ēn that we know of is Atrnerseh <sup>18</sup>, grandson of Vasak III of Siwnik', so that a claim by the Halbakids to a descent from a Prince of Xaç'ēn is tantamount to a profession of Siwnid lineage. It would appear from all of this that Halbak I's claim to a descent from a fifth century Prince of Xaç'ēn is only a family chimera.

In any case, the Halbakids certainly made themselves felt over a wide expanse of territory. Though their family abbey was Gelard (Ayrivank') in the vicinity of Gairni <sup>19</sup>, most of the members of this house were buried in Vayoc' Jor, which lay considerably further south <sup>20</sup>, while their Haykazian branch held sway in Zangezur far to the east. Besides the Haykazians, the Prošians were also descended from the Halbakids, the former being only a ramification of the latter <sup>21</sup>.

This Prošid branch of the Halbakids represents the descendents of Hasan-Proš (fl. 1214-1288), a grandson of Halbak II <sup>22</sup>. There is no need to enter into a discussion of this line in any detail as it has already been examined exhaustively by Yovsēp'ean <sup>23</sup>. The descent passed from Proš, himself, through his son Hasan I (fl. 1307), grandson, Eač' (d. 1317) and great-grandson Hasan II (d. 1351). After this the stemma becomes extremely broken and is known to us only through inscriptions at Gelard and through the colophons in various manuscripts copied there. The last individuals to be cited as being of Prošid descent were the *vardapet* Daniel, Abbot of Gelard in 1705, and his contemporary Israel Ori (d. 1711). The latter was the son of Melik Israel Haykazian and a brother of Melik Isaiah Haykazian and, since Israel Ori's descent from Proš is assured <sup>24</sup>, then the Haykazean Meliks of Zangezur can only be a ramification of the Halbakids.

<sup>18</sup> MD III, 22.

<sup>19</sup> For this house cf. Garegin Kat'olikos Yovsep'ean, *Xalbakēank' kam Prošēank' Hayoc' patmut'ean mej* (Antilias, 1969).

<sup>20</sup> S. G. Barxudaryan, *Divan hay vimagrut'yan III* (Erevan, 1967), *passim*.

<sup>21</sup> Yovsep'ean, *Xalbakēank'*, genealogical chart.

<sup>22</sup> Proš, actually Hasan-Proš, is attested as early as 1214 and as late as 1288. He was deceased by 1291. An inscription on the corner of the apse in the interior of the Church of St. Astuacacin at Gelard, dated 1283, refers to various donations, constructions, and reconstructions (in the main gavit, rock-hewn gavit, the chapel and the burial Chamber) effected by Prince Proš. According to one inscription, Proš brought the monastery from Avan, son of Prince Atabek Ivane (Zaxarean) and converted it into a family burial abbey (*Documents of Armenian Architecture G(h)eghard*, Milan, 1973, p. 16).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 136-156.



### 1. *The Haykazid Meliks of Kašatal (Cagajor or Zangezur)*

As is clear from the *Secrets*, the Israelids of Ĵraberđ were a branch of the Haykazean Meliks of Zangezur. Descended from Melik Isaiah (son of Melik Israel), who in 1687 migrated to Karabagh from his father's domain in Siwnik', according to the same source, this Melik Isaiah was a great-grandson of Melik Haykaz who had emigrated to Iran under Shah Abbas in 1586<sup>25</sup>. Now, as I have shown, there is a reference in one of the documents published by Ezov<sup>26</sup> to three previous meliks of this house — Martin, Ałajan and Garakan — whose combined reigns would probably put the Haykazean stemma back to the fifteenth century and so probably make this melikdom yet another foundation of Jehan Shah. Indeed, a *Paron* Haykaz is found in the Halbakid line at just about this time<sup>27</sup>. A brother of John, Bishop of Gełard in 1475, this Haykaz may very well have been the founder of the Haykazean line<sup>28</sup>. Only through the agency of Jehan Shah can we readily explain how the Haykazid branch of the Halbakids came at this time to possess lands so far from Vayoc' Jor which lay on the other side of Sisian from Kašatal.

The territory of the Haykazean house would appear to have consisted of both the districts of Kašatal and Jagejor, i.e. the earlier districts of Ałahečk' and Haband<sup>29</sup>. That both of these districts were held by the family is known from the fact that the melikdom

<sup>25</sup> *Secrets*, 205. Haykaz, Melik of K'ašatal, from the village of Xnacax, went to Persia but left his son Hayk at home where the local people designated him their ruler. Later, Hayk obtained official recognition of his position from the Shah.

<sup>26</sup> Ezov, *ibid.*, Doc. no. 5, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> Yovsep'ean, *ibid.*, genealogical chart. Arłut' II of this line, Prince of Vayoc' Jor in 1417, had seven grandsons but only one, Haykaz, is styled « paron » so that it is likely that he was the eldest and the possible ancestor of the Haykazean meliks. Isaac Melik-Haykazyan, Russian general at the end of the nineteenth century, was a descendant of a branch of this house which had settled in Šuša (Letter from his grandson, Dr. Begzadian-Khachatrian, dated July, 29, 1970).

<sup>28</sup> Two volumes in the *Divan hay vimagrut'yan* series (*Corpus Inscriptionum Armenicarum* ed. S. G. Barxudarian) deal with Siwnik': vol. II, *Gorisi, Sisiani ew Lap'ani šrjanner* (Erevan, (Erevan, 1960) and vol. III, *Tayoc'jor Elegnajori ew Azibekov šrjanner* (1967) and a third is in preparation on the inscriptions of Gełark'unik'. Unfortunately, little that has not already been previously gathered is available from the first two volumes which largely confirm the materials gathered by Brosset.

<sup>29</sup> A comparison of the maps of Eremyan (*Hayastan*) with the data on p. 107 of the *Hayastan SSR Atlas* has made these comparisons possible.

<sup>30</sup> Raffi (Hakob Melik-Hakobean) *Xamsayi melik'ut'iwnner* (Vienna, 1906), 313.



was called Zangezur (i.e. Jagejor)<sup>30</sup> while its center was at the village of Xnacax which lay in Kašataļ<sup>31</sup>. Since Eremyan estimates the area of Ałahečk' at 1,402 sq. kms. and that of Haband at 1,325 sq. kms.<sup>32</sup>, the total area of the Haykazeen holdings would have been some 1,727 sq. kms. This territory embraced the whole upper valley of the Hagaru or Akera River (earlier *Alvan* or *Arian*) including its upper tributaries the Axmedli, Ildirim-su, Loč'az-su (Ałavno-*get*), Šalva and P'č'anis-č'ai.

#### IV. THE P'ARSADANID MELIKS OF TAT'EW AND BEX (OR LAP'AN)

The P'arsadanians, by their name, betray a Georgian origin and this could possibly suggest an Orbelid connection for the Orbelids had lived several centuries in Georgia before settling in Siwnik'. On the other hand, the Dedeyan family of Paris, which claims descent from the P'arsadanids through their offshoots, the Šahumid Meliks of Melri, assert that they were descended from the Jalikid branch of the Haykid House of Siwnik', i.e. from the Prince of Kavsakan and K'ašunik (the «Other» Bałk') issued from Isaac I (d. 844), a relative of Vasak III Prince of Siwnik' (d. 821).

According to the Dedeyan family tradition, Melik P'arsadan was a paternal cousin of Stephen Šahumian, who was a son of Melik Vrt'anēs, a grandson of Melik Isaac and a great-grandson of Melik Šahum the Red. Stephen Šahumian went to Venice as a young man and did not return until the time of the revolt under David Beg (1720's). By this time his father was dead and the melikdom had passed to Vrt'anēs' brother and then to the brother's son P'arsadan (or possibly directly to P'arsadan if Vrt'anēs' brother was already deceased). The absence of Stephen in Venice doubtless accounts for

<sup>31</sup> *Secrets*, 205. Map 107 in the *Hayastan SSR Atlas* has Cagejor (Zangezur) with its capital at Goris, separate from K'ašataļ with its capital at Xnacax in the period 1785-1825.

<sup>32</sup> Eremyan, 117. Goris (formerly *Gerusi*) is a remarkable town located on a steep slope and containing many cave dwellings including some hewn out of natural rock formations similar to those at Göreme and elsewhere in Cappadocia. Such dwellings are found in other places in K'ašataļ as well, especially at the village of Xot and Xnjoresk (cf. B. M. Arutyunyan and S. A. Safaryan, *Pamyatniki Armyanskogo Zodchestva* (Moscow, 1951), 176-184). In the old days the region of Goris was noted for fruit-growing, and for cattle and horse-breeding.

his not having inherited his father's domains, and the all-power of David Beg in Siwnik' at this time probably prevented him from forcing his claim. In any case, we know that Stephen was recompensed by David Beg who granted him the region of Kenavuz (Melri) as his domain. Whatever their origin, however, the P'arsadaneans appear as two distinct lines by the eighteenth century, each holding its own melikdom, the one, Tat'ew, the other, Bex <sup>33</sup>.

The Melikdom of Tat'ew was centered around the village and monastery of the same name, the latter being the ecclesiastical center for the whole of Siwnik'. Since the River Sisian lay between Tat'ew and the town of Sisian, the River Orotan between Tat'ew and Goris and the Bargiwšat Mountains between Tat'ew and Ļap'an we can take these three geographical features as respectively, the northern, eastern and southern borders of the melikdom. The Zangezur (Siwnik') Mountains, of course, bounded it on the west. The region thus enclosed corresponded to the southern third of the earlier district of Čluk (Sisian) and so comprised some 650 sq. kms. <sup>34</sup>. That the P'arsadaneans held a third of Sisian, the earlier Čluk, supports the idea that they were originally an Orbelid offshoot.

The Melikdom of Bex or Bałaberd was located south of the Bargiwšat, Mountains in the valley of the Olji River and its tributaries, and was bounded on the south by the Melri range. It thus corresponded to the region of Ļap'an proper and to the earlier district of Jork' and to much of Bałk'. Its area would have been roughly 1200 sq. kms. <sup>35</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> T. X. Hakobyan, *Hayastani patmakan ašxarhagrut'yun* 2nd ed. (Erevan, 1968), 391-392. This Jałikid line, referred to by Ut'mazyan as « the Jagikeans of Bałk' (cf. the review article of his book *Siwnik in the IXth and Xth Centuries*, Erevan, 1958, in Armenian, by H. Berberian in REA, n. S., III, 1966, 411). Not shown on the Siwnid chart with my preliminary study (REA N.S., IX, 1972), this line is last heard of in the person of Ĵevanšer II (son of Jałik II) who died c. 960. That this house could have survived for so many centuries in southern Siwnik' without being known to history seems unlikely although it is not impossible. Certainly its holdings correspond more or less to those of the later P'arsadanids, while the inscriptions of this region (Arewik/Melri) have not yet been published. For the traditions preserved by the Dedeyans cf. Prince Christian Dedeyan, *Les Dedeyan leurs titres, leurs alliances* (Venice, 1971), a work which must be treated with critical reserve as it contains very little supporting documentation.

<sup>34</sup> Eremyan, 117, *Hayastan SSR Atlas*, 107.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* According to the letter of Israel Ori to the Elector Palatinate (supra, n. 5) Greater Kapan had seven *intendances* (stewardships or administrative districts) in 1699. These can only be the local melikdoms which may, at that time, have formed a kind



The center of the melikdom was the strong fort of Halijor. The Melik (-Parsadaniantz) family of Paris is descended from this branch of the Parsadanid House <sup>36</sup>.

## V. THE LESSER MELIKDOMS OF SOUTHERN SIWNİK'

There appear to have been some four lesser melikdoms in southern Siwnik' — Bargiwšat, Č'ovundur, Melri and Ordubat — but not very much is known at present about any of them beyond the fact that the first three were included in the Greater Lap'an established by David Beg in the 1720's <sup>37</sup>.

Although little is known of the histories of these four melikdoms <sup>38</sup>, their territories are rather easy to determine.

### 1. *The Melikdom of Bargiwšat (Barkušat, Bargušat)*

Bargiwšat was located in the valley of the lower course of the Orotan River, where the river is still known as the Bargušat (*sic*)

of federation which prefigured and may even have given rise to the Greater Kapan of David-Beg. These seven were probably Tat'ew, Bex, Lesser Kapan, Bargiwšat, Č'undur, Melri and Ordubat, all of which played a role in the time of David-Beg. Greater Kapan was also known as *Yotnaberd* «seven castles», which suggests the «capitals» of the seven *intendences* referred to above.

<sup>36</sup> Under Russian rule the holdings of the Meliks P'arsadanean — at least of the branch of Bex — were greatly reduced and had come to comprise solely the valley of the upper course of the River Č'ovundur (now the Šikahol) and its various tiny tributaries. These holdings consisted of some 20,000 hectares of copper mines and forests, besides another 18,000 hectares of agricultural land. These adjoined the smaller properties of the Melik-Stepanian, Melik-Azarean and Melik-Karagyuzian families, the last of whom may have been ramifications of the P'arsadanid house, while the first was a ramification of the Šahumeans of whom the P'arsadanids themselves were a branch. Here lay the old fortress of Halijor, the Armenian village of Bex and the three Tatar villages of Šahijul, Karhana and Kšlag. Small though it was, this district contained a forest, two factories and two market centers, but clearly much of the family domains had been sold (or expropriated?) and what was left comprised little more than a large estate. (Letter with map from Dr. Michel Melik-(Parsadaniantz) of Paris, dated 27 August 1970.)

<sup>37</sup> Hakobyan, 391.

<sup>38</sup> We do not even know how far back the existence of these melikdoms may be traced. They first appear in connection with the uprising of David-Beg in the 1720's, (Raffi, 313).

before it enters the Hagaru (anc. : *Aluan*). Essentially a low-lying region, it was bounded on the north, east and west by the various southern extensions of the Siwnian mountains and by the River Arax on the south. This melikdom corresponded to no earlier region but comprised the eastern parts of the old districts of Balk' and Kovsakan as well as the southermost part of Haband. Its area was thus about 1400 sq. kms. <sup>39</sup>.

The seat of this melikdom appears to have been the important village of Arc'vanik <sup>40</sup>, the earlier *Erec'-Erec'vanik*, where is found the unmarked tomb of Melik P'rangiwl (*Frangiwl*), who betrayed the Armenian cause in the time of David-Beg and who is still referred to locally as *šon* (i.e. *šun*) Frangiwl — 'Frangiwl the dog' <sup>41</sup>. Here also was located the fortress of Zeyva.

## 2. *The Melikdom of Č'undur or Č'avundur*

Č'undur was smaller than Bargiwšat and lay directly west of it. It occupied the lower course of the Olji River to the point where it enters the Arax. Another low-lying region, it corresponded to the western two-thirds of the earlier district of Kovsakan and so comprised c. 400 sq. kms. It was bounded on the south by the Arax and on the west by the Melri Mountains, the most southeasterly spur of the Zangezur Range <sup>42</sup>. Nothing is known of the Meliks of Č'undur.

## 3. *The Melikdom of Melri (or Kenavuz)*

This melikdom occupied the valley of the little Melri River. Bounded on the north and east by the Melri Mountains, on the south by the Arax and on the west by the main ridge of the Zangezur (Siwnik') range, it corresponded exactly to the earlier district of Arewik' and comprised some 625 sq. kms. <sup>43</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Eremyan, 117; *Hayastan SSR Atlas*, 107.

<sup>40</sup> E. Melik-Šakhnazarov, « Selenie Artsvanik, Zangezurskago uezda, Elizabetpolskoi gubernii », in *Sbornik Materialov dlya plemen Kavkaza*, Tiflis (1898), Part II.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 2; Barxudaryan, *Divan II*, 133.

<sup>42</sup> Eremyan, 117; *Hayastan SSR Atlas*, 107.

<sup>43</sup> The chief stronghold of this melikdom appears to have been the fortress of Kak'avaberd (*Hayastan SSR Atlas*, 107), in the northern part of the district, but Vank was fortified too. There is a castle on a cliff overlooking the town of Melri, which may also have been a residence of the local meliks, and there is also an old monastery,



According to the family tradition of the Dedeyans of Paris, who claim descent from the Šahumid Meliks of Melri in the female line, the P'arsadanids were merely an offshoot of the Šahumids, who, as we have already seen, were said to be descended from the Jalikid branch of the Haykids of Siwnik' <sup>44</sup>. The Šahumids, according to the Dedeyans, trace their descent from a certain Melik Šahum the Red, whose seat lay at the fortified town of Vank near Melri and also at Endastan village (now *Txod* or *Txdua*) <sup>45</sup>.

Sometime before 1650, Oskan, grandson of Šahum the Red and brother of Melik Vrt'anēs, went to Venice where he became a merchant and banker and the founder of the Venetian family of Saum <sup>46</sup>. Much later Oskan was joined in Venice by his nephew Stephen Šahumean, son of Melik Vrt'anēs. This Stephen was one of the chief instigators of the revolt of the Armenians against the Persians and Turks in the 1720's and it was he who from Venice persuaded David Beg to seek the aid of King Vaxtang VI of Georgia (1711-1714, 1719-1727) and to assume the leadership of the revolt <sup>47</sup>. Returning to Siwnik', Stephen, himself, took the field under David Beg alongside of his paternal cousins Melik P'arsadan of Halijor (Bex), Prince Nubar and Avetis the Priest. Among other feats, he led a force of 2,000 Armenians which defeated an army of 11,000 Persians before Melri <sup>48</sup>. Stephen received from David Beg the entire region of Kenavuz or Kenwaz (the ancient district of Arewik') as his domain with his capital at Melri <sup>49</sup>. Since this region contained the family fortress of Vank, however, Stephen appears merely to have been confirmed in his ancestral domains.

The Armenian revolt ended in defeat, of course, and in 1733 Stephen Šahumean returned to Venice where, in 1747, he married a Venetian lady of Armenian origin, Rosalba Maria Barbara Caracas. A single daughter was born of this marriage, Anna Maria Angela (1750-1783), who in 1780 married a Venetian gentleman Giovanni Battista Riatti.

Melru-vank', which may provide some inscriptions concerning this house. Such inscriptions as may be found in the *raion* of Melri have not yet been published.

<sup>44</sup> *Supra*, n. 33. The last known Jalikid was Jevanšer II, who died c. 960.

<sup>45</sup> Dedeyan, 47.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

Their son John returned to Siwnik<sup>50</sup> where he founded the line of Melik Step'anean, which is said to have possessed over fifty villages in the district of Araġajor, north of Bex<sup>50</sup>.

Stephan Šahumeam left Venice in 1757 and was never heard of again. His Uncle Oskan's grandson David also left Venice but is known to have settled in Smyrna (Izmir), in the Ottoman Empire, where he established another branch of the Šahumeans that survived until the expulsion of the Greek and Armenian communities from that city in 1922. David's great-great grandson Hayrapet (1790-1860) married Regine Sherimanian or Sceriman (1800-1870), daughter of Gaspard Sceriman. This Gaspard was a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, and was descended from an Armenian family which had migrated to the Empire from New Julfa at Ispahan, Iran<sup>51</sup>. Hayrapet's brother, Avetis, was first dragoman of the Ottoman Embassy in Paris under Louis-Philippe (1830-1848) and then served in Vienna, while another brother, Stephen, was the grandfather of Stephen Šahumean (1878-1918), chairman of the Baku Bolshevik Central Committee, and the Bolshevik Party's extraordinary Commission for the Caucasus. The latter was executed along with the other twenty-five Baku commissars in Central Asia in 1918. In 1970, Stephen's son, L. S. Shaumyan, was chief editor of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*<sup>52</sup>.

#### 4. *The Melikdom of Ordubat*

The Melikdom of Ordubat, centered in the town of the same name, lay west of Melri. Bounded on the north and east by the Zangezur Range, on the south by the Arax and extending eastwards to include the town of Akulis (anc. : *Oskiolay*), it comprised the eastern quarter of the old district of Golt'n and so included no more than c. 350 sq. kms.<sup>53</sup>. Nothing is known of its Melik house.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 55-56. The town of Stepanavan (formerly Jalaloglu in Soviet Armenia; Šahumiani (Šulaveri) in Soviet Georgia; and Stepanakert (*Xankendi*), capital of Nagorny Karabagh SSR in Soviet Azerbaijan, are all named for this Stephen Šahumean, who is counted a great hero in the Soviet Union.

<sup>53</sup> Eremyan, 117. *Hayastan SSR Atlas*, 107. Since Raffi (314) refers to a Melik Musa of Ordubat in the time of David Beg (c. 1722), it is interesting to note that the khans of Erevan were said to be descended from a certain Musabekeanc' of Golt'n who had



## VI. THE MELIKS IN GEĻARK'UNIK'

Hakobyan refers to the existence of several small melikdoms in GeĻark'unik' lying along the south shore of Lake Sevan under the supervision of the Šahnazarids <sup>54</sup>. It is to the late S. Barxudaryan, however, that we owe our first detailed information concerning these lesser houses. Thanks to his careful examination of a curious document preserved in the Matenadaran, he was able to identify four of these houses and to locate the seat of each <sup>55</sup>.

According to this document, ten meliks and *tanuters* of GeĻark'unik' went as a delegation to the monastery of Tat'ew and there, after consulting the monks and various earlier documents, agreed to place the district of GeĻark'unik' under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Diocese of Tat'ew. The Tat'ew document, signed by the members of the delegation and dated 1513 <sup>56</sup>, represents the text of their

apostasized in the time of Shah Abbas I (1586-1628). Ordubat lay in the old district of Goġt'n and a connection between the Musabekeans and the Meliks of Ordubat is not impossible. Hussein-Khan Musabekean of Akulis (also in Goġt'n) was Governor of Šamaxi for the Persians, in the time of Nadir Shah (1736-1747). His brother, Mehmed Lulixan, was Persian viceroy in Erevan at the same time.

In the days of Shah Abbas I, we also hear of a certain Saru-beg and his brother Nazar of the House of Oskanapat; Oġlan-Kešiř and his brother K'irla-beg of Hat'erk (in the later Ĵraberđ). Melik P'ařiř of Xořiř and Melik Babi of Breti. (Arak'el, 3, III). Neither of these last two meliks is identifiable. Mention is also made by Arak'el of a certain John (d. 1582) son of Ĵehanřah « of the line of Dop' », who was born in Car in « Lesser Siwnik' » (i.e. Arc'ax). This father and son were obviously of the House of Car which was, thus, clearly of Dop'eank' i.e. Haykid-Siwnid descent.

<sup>54</sup> Hakobyan, 390. This entire region — the pre-Urartian *Welikuni* — has been inhabited from the most remote period and the western and southern shores of the lake contain an astonishing collection of cyclopean fortresses and other prehistoric constructions, cf. G. H. Mik'ayelyan, *Ševani avazani Kiklopyan amroc' nerə* (Erevan, 1968). The economy of the region has always been based largely on cattle breeding and sheep raising.

<sup>55</sup> S. Barxudarian, « GeĻark'unik'i melik'nern u tanutererə əst Tat'evi vank'i mi P'astat'it'i ». *Banber Matenadarani* 8 (1967), 191-227.

<sup>56</sup> The signatories of the Tat'ew document are as follows :

1. P'irhamzē, son of Eġiře and grandson of Melik Mirza.
2. T'ankriġuli, son of Melik Łukas and grandson of Buġik.
3. Ėhiē, son of Pudal, grandson of Tēluġartař.
4. Tarxan of K't'ařen.
5. Sahlupat' of Gawar, son of Astuacatur, grandson of Miranřah.
6. Bařarat' of Kot'.
7. Mat'ios of Kac.

agreement and binds the signatories not to do anything contrary to the agreement with the Xač'ēnians, the bishops, or with the Katholikos <sup>57</sup>.

The Tat'ew document does not indicate which of the ten signatories was a melik and which a *tanuter*, but by examining the various Xač'kars and tombstones in Gełark'unik', Barxudaryan was able to settle this particular question. The meliks discovered by him through this document are the following :

### 1. *The Mirzayid Meliks of Łulali*

Their house is represented in the Tat'ew document by Pirhamza son of Elisaeus, grandson of Melik Mirza, the last of whom is last cited in 1513 when P'irhamza, his grandson, already had a son of his own. As we shall see, there is evidence that Melik Mirza died in 1502.

The seat of this house was the village of Łulali (now Karmir) located some two kms. southeast of the present town of Kamo (formerly Nor Bayazet and, before that, Gawar or Gawarni and still earlier, the town of Gełak'uni), where several inscriptions of the house are still to be found.

The origin of this Mirzayid house is not certain and Bishop Karapet who knew the family from its inscriptions, tried to identify Melik Mirza with the melik of the same name cited in an inscription found at Vanevan monastery (in the modern district of Martuni) as having died in 1502 <sup>58</sup>. Barxudaryan rejects this, however, on the grounds that the latter was Melik of Great Mazra village in Sodk' district just east of Gełark'unik'. Barxudaryan also noted that the Pirhamza, whose inscriptions are also found at Great Mazra, had four sons whose names differ from that of the one son (Zohrab) known to us from the inscriptions of Melik P'irhamza of Łulali <sup>60</sup>.

While agreeing with Barxudaryan on the fact that identical names are often found in different houses, I am still inclined to feel that there was some connection between the line of Łulali and that of the

8. Aysmaykul of Kncut.

9. P'iri, son of Lupat', grandson of Përam.

10. Kunduz of Ganjak.

<sup>57</sup> Barxudaryan, 193.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 194 ff.

<sup>59</sup> Karapet *Episkopos* (der Minassian), *Dop'eank' ew Melik-Šahnazareank'* (Etchmiadzin, 1914), 99.

<sup>60</sup> Barxudaryan, 197.



Dop'eank' at Great Mazra. First of all, as we have already seen, we know from Hakobyan that the melikdoms along the south shore of the lake were subject to the Šahnazarids (i.e. Dop'eank') <sup>61</sup>, second, we have no certainty that Melik Mirza of Łulali was actually Melik of Łulali, itself, just because his grandson P'irhamza was, or that he died in 1505 or 1513 the last two years he was cited in an inscription at Łulali. These citations are not from his tombstone and could have been made after his death. Finally, if the Dop'eank' Meliks of Great Mazra were suzerains over the other meliks to the west of them, then the most likely reason for this would be that the latter represented secondary branches of the Dop'eank' house. Fourth, the meliks of Great Mazra were recognized as Lords of Gełam in the time of Melik Šahnazar I (d. 1606) <sup>62</sup> even though Sotk' lay outside of Gełark'unik' so that their overlordship of both districts was a well-known fact at that time. Finally, that the two Pirhamzas are not identical need not trouble us for, as a grandson of Melik Mirza, Melik P'irhamza of Łulali could have been a cousin of the one at Great Mazra who, incidently, is not called a melik in his inscription <sup>63</sup>. For the present, I am inclined to accept some connection between the Mirzayids and the Dop'eank' as well as with the later Gełameans, who may have been descended from the former.

## 2. *The Bulikid Meliks of P'arakank'.*

The Bulikean's are represented in the Tat'ew document by Melik Tankriuli, son of Melik Luke (Łukas), grandson of Bulik (or Albuła). Their inscriptions are to be found on several xac'kars located at the ruins of the old village of Upper K'iolałian (formerly P'arakank' or P'arakunis) two to three kms., south of Covinar in the northern part of the district of Martuni <sup>64</sup>. Since Bulik is not styled « melik », it is obvious that Luke was the first to hold this title and, since he died in 1451, he undoubtedly received it from Jehan Shah (1435-1467). This house can be traced back to the XIVth Century but, since the name Albuła is found in the Zakarid, Dop'id and Orbelid houses, it could be

<sup>61</sup> Hakobyan, 390.

<sup>62</sup> Arak'el of Tabriz, in M. F. Brosset, *Collection des historiens arméniens*, vol. I (St. Petersburg, 1874), 453.

<sup>63</sup> Barxudaryan, *ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 198 ff.

descended from any one of the three <sup>65</sup>. It is certain, however, as we shall see, that it is of Dop'iank' descent.

### 3. *The Manuč'arid Meliks of Dalulardaš*

Represented at Tat'ew by Ēhie, son of Pudał, and grandson of Telulartaš, this house had its seat at Dalulardaš village, now the village of Saruxan, located some ten kms. south of Kamo <sup>66</sup>. Nothing is known of the family but inscriptions found in the village reveal the existence of Manuč'arid meliks there in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries <sup>67</sup>.

### 4. *The Azarid Meliks of Ganjak and Noraduz*

Kunduz is the tenth signatory of the Tat'ew document and although no information is given about his family, his village is cited as Ganjak, a well-known locality in the district of Kamo. Later called K'yosa Mahmat and now Batikyan, it is located seven to eight kms. south of the city of Kamo. An exploration among the inscriptions of this part of Gelark'unik', however, shows that the burial place of his house was at Noraduz, a village to the east of Kamo, closer to Lake Sevan <sup>68</sup>. From these inscriptions it is clear that neither Kunduz nor his father Azaria (d. 1513) were meliks. Indeed, the latter is referred to simply as a « chief » (*araĵnord*). It is Barek, son of Kunduz, who is the first of this house to bear the title « melik » (cited in 1549 and 1555) <sup>69</sup>. After the time of Melik Barek, the seat of this house was moved from Ganjak to Noraduz, which was the chief place in the district until the rise of Kamo as a town early in the XIXth century <sup>70</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 201. Cf. 4) *infra*.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 203 ff.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.

<sup>68</sup> Barxudaryan, 218.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 222. A certain Melikazarian (*sic*), uncle of the Armenian revolutionary, Avetis Nazarbekian, is cited as one of the wealthiest Armenian capitalists of Tiflis in 1886, cf. Louis Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1963), 105. A Melik-Azariantz Family owned property adjacent to those of the Meliks-P'arsadanianc' of Bex.

That meliks were being created as late as c. 1800 and that the title was bestowed



The above are the only four of the signatories of the Tat'ew document who appear to have belonged to melikal houses. The three meliks who already bore the title in 1513 are the first three names signed on the document. Kunduz who signed last, was not as we have seen a melik, his son being the first to have this title. Thus all of the last seven signatories were tanuters.

An examination of the inscriptions gathered by Barxudaryan reveals some interesting data :

1) No title of melik antedates the time of Jehan Shah but the appearance of Melik Barek in the mid-XVIth century shows that the title was still being created by the Persians for local grandees <sup>71</sup>, unless, of course, he received the title as the nearest male relative of an actual melik who may have been a distant relation of his father or grandfather. There is, however, no evidence for this.

2) With the exception of the Meliks of Dalulardaš, none of these houses may be traced in the inscriptions after the late XVIth century.

3) Melik T'ankriḡuli married Xoncat, the daughter of a certain Melik Xutayabaxš in the mid XVth century <sup>72</sup>. We do not know to which house this melik belonged.

4) Melik T'ankriḡuli's sister, Davlat', married Mirzaḡan, Great Prince (*Mec Iṣḡan*) of Car. In an inscription found in the village of Car, she is described as being of the house of Geḡam (*i tanēn Geḡamay*) <sup>73</sup>. The Dopeank' descent of this « Buḡikean » house is thus assured.

5) Besides being addressed as *baron*, the meliks (and the tanuters as well) could be called *aḡa*, <sup>74</sup> while the sister-in-law of one tanuter — Helen, wife of T'uman — is herself styled *baron*, as is Xoncat, the wife of Melik T'ankriḡuli <sup>75</sup>.

on worthies who were little, if anything, more than village elders or headmen is indicated by Friedrich Parrot who on his ascent of Mt. Ararat was received by a certain Stepan Aga, Melik of Arguri (*sic*) who had « obtained some consideration during the supremacy of the Persians, and, along with it the honorable and heritable title of Melik, or, as it may be remembered, governor ». (*Journey to Ararat*, transl. by W. D. Cooley, London, 1846, 155.)

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>72</sup> The last recorded member of the Buḡikids is Lasumḡan (1571); of the Azarids, Melik Papaḡan (d. 1578); and of the Mirzayids, Zohrab (1505). The Miranšahids, who were merely tanuters, are attested as late as 1598 in the person of Haxnazar Aḡa.

<sup>73</sup> Barxudarian, 198.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 200, note 0.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 212, 202.

6) In the XVIth century a house of Miranšah held the tanutership of Kamo (known as *Gawaṛ* at that time) but an inscription found on a *xač'kar* in a church in an old cemetery on the eastern edge of the town refers to a melik in 1637. Thus, either *Gawaṛ* had its own line of meliks separate from the tanuters of the place or the tanuters there were ultimately elevated to the rank of melik by the Persians <sup>77</sup>.

7) The first and third meliks cited in the Tat'ew document had their seats near Kamo and the second near Covinar in the district of Martuni, while the Azarids, once they achieved melik status in the person of Melik Barek, also resided near Kamo. Now the district of Kamo comprised some twenty-two villages but if, as appears clear, the tanuters were subject to the three meliks, and at least three of the tanuters resided in the district of Martuni and another in the district of Basargeč'ar, then the sway of these meliks extended over more than double that number of villages <sup>78</sup>.

8) The territory of the Dop'eank' extended as far as the monastery of Šoḷagavank' near Martuni <sup>79</sup> a clear overlap into part of the region governed by these meliks at a later time. Since at least one of these, houses — the Buḷikids — are known to have been of the House of Geḷam, these two facts tend to give weight to our growing evidence that the meliks in Geḷark'unik' were of Dop'id, and, thus of Siwnid descent. Yet another piece of evidence which supports this opinion is found in the Tat'ew document, itself, wherein the signatories agree to do nothing contrary to its provisions with—among others — the Xač'ēnians, which, in this context can only mean the Vaxtankean descended meliks of Karabagh. The inference would appear to be that, prior to the signing of this document, the district of Geḷark'unik' may have been ecclesiastically under the jurisdiction of the Katholikos of Albania. Such an ecclesiastical subordination would clearly have been a remnant of the administrative subordination of the district of Siwnik' to the Vaxtankian Meliks of Karabagh.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

<sup>79</sup> *Karapet Episkopos*, cited by Barxudaryan, 197.



## CONCLUSION

The more we examine the origins, genealogies, territories and histories of the various melikdoms, the more these entities fall into a common pattern. The melikdoms of Siwnik' and Karabagh appear at approximately the same time and held a similar position under the Persian Shahs. Those of Karabagh are distinguished from those of Siwnik' only in being better known to history while, at the present state of our investigations, most, if not all of the houses of both regions, appear to have been descended from the nobility of ancient and medieval Armenia. The importance of this survival of ancient Armenian society — whose origins ante-date the Urartian federation of the ninth-sixth centuries B.C. — is difficult to evaluate but must not be underestimated. While their rule was purely local and politically insignificant, they did play a role in the Ottoman and Russian struggles with Persia and were instrumental in drawing the attention of Imperial Russia to Armenian affairs. More important was the position they held, however humble, of leaders of their people; the sole leadership left protecting however small a fragment of the Armenian population from the depredations of their Muslim neighbors. The collection of taxes locally by agents of the meliks, who knew the ability of their people to pay, was, moreover, a considerable advantage over having them collected by foreign tax-gatherers. Centers of resistance to foreign invasion, the meliks also served their nation as patrons of the arts, restoring architectural monuments, commissioning *xač'kars* and other stonework and paying for the production of manuscripts. Finally, whether soliciting aid from the Pope or placing themselves under the suzerainty of the Tsar <sup>80</sup>, these Princes never hesitated to speak for the whole Armenian people clearly recognizing in themselves the last legitimate voice of the Armenian nation of old <sup>81</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> The five meliks of Karabagh (Hasan-Jalalians, Beglarians, Šahnazarians, Israelians and Avanians) received foreign recognition of their sovereign status when, through a charter of Tsar Paul (1796-1801) dated 2 June 1799, they accepted the suzerainty of Imperial Russia (Toumanoff 217, n. 250).

<sup>81</sup> Of the various melik houses of Armenia only the Šahnazarids appear playing a significant role in recent Armenian history. Gerasim Melik-Šahnazarean was Mayor of Šuša in 1918 (R. Hovanissian, *The Armenian Republic*, vol. I, 1918-1919, Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1971, 88) and was regarded as the spokesman of the commercial classes of that city at that difficult time. The following year, Aslan Melik-Šahnazarean was



## ADDENDA

A. *The Institution of Tanuter*

The word *tanuter* is quite ancient in the Armenian language and has had different meanings at different times in Armenian history. Linguistically, it is based on the word *ter* 'lord' (from *ti* indicating 'divinity', as in Latin *divus*; English, *divine*) plus *ayr* 'man' (as in Greek *ἄνθρωπος*) used with the genitive singular of the word *tun* 'house' (as in Latin *domus*) and thus means «houselord». As such, it is the equivalent of the Georgian term *mamasaxilisi* and the Latin *paterfamilias*, while in the Armenian Bible it is used to translate the Greek *οἰκοδεσπότης* which is rendered 'householder' in the Revised Standard edition (e.g. Matt. 13.52) <sup>82</sup>.

In ancient Armenian historical texts *tanuter* is used in a generally descriptive way as one of the designations for the higher nobility rather than with any more precise meaning. Thus, Lazarus of P'arp'i uses *tanuter* along with *awag*, *awag tanuter*, *naxarar*, *išxan*, *awag sepuh* and *mecamec* to refer to any of the higher nobility <sup>83</sup>. In the XVth-XVIth centuries, however, the use of this term had altered and we find it having two basic meanings. In the first place it referred to the head of a family or dynasty who received a tithe from his village, and, in the second, to a sort of elected village chief also called *k'yoxva* or *res* (*re'is*) and also, as we see from the inscriptions, *araġnord*. The

chairman of the Karabagh Council, the organization representing the Karabagh Armenians in their struggle for union with the Armenian republic rather than with Azerbaidzhan (*ibid.*, 169). Finally Sokrat Bek Melik-Šahnazarean is called by Hovanissian, «one of the partisan chiefs of Karabagh» in the same period (*ibid.*, 88).

Besides these patriots, however, a certain George Melik-Karageozian, a member of the Armenian Populist Party, was Assistant Foreign Minister of the Armenian Republic in 1918 and Minister of Enlightenment the following year (*supra*, n. 35), while a certain Haik Melik-Dadayan is cited as a representative of the Russian Armenians sent to investigate conditions in Turkish Armenia in 1883 (Nalbandian, 138). Perhaps the most prominent descendent of a melikal house was Stephen Šahumean (Stepan Shaumyan) who was the leading Armenian Bolshevik until his death on 1918. Who can say to what extent a consciousness of his descent may have played in his decision to devote his life to the introduction of Marxism among his people?

<sup>82</sup> Toumanoff, 115, p. 185.

<sup>83</sup> Lazarus of P'arpi (Lazar P'arpec'i), *Patmut'iwn Hayoc' (History of Armenia)*, ed. *Lukasian Matenadaran 2* (Tiflis, 1907).



jurisdiction of the first type of *tanuter* was solely over his family while the latter held sway over an entire village <sup>84</sup>.

According to Xač'ikyan <sup>85</sup> there was a tendency for the elected tanuters to become hereditary and, indeed, the inscriptions show as many as three to four generations of a single house holding the position, while, Šalubat, tanuter of Gawar (kamo) held his office for sixty years!

While a melik could only be a man, the function of a *tanuter* could be exercised by a woman and Barxudaryan cites an inscription of a certain Atis, mother of the *tanuter* Melk'on, who held the position of *araĭnord* of her village in the mid-XVIth century <sup>86</sup>. While the *tanuters* were obviously less considerable than the meliks, it is not certain if they were always subject to the latter. Although there is evidence of such a subordination in the XVIIIth century, there must have been many cases where villages possessed tanuters in districts where there were no meliks and it is clear, as Barxudaryan points out, that the *tanuters* who signed the document of Tat'ew were the plenipotentiary representatives of their respective villages <sup>87</sup>. If the term *tanuter* were to be rendered into English, « village chief » or « headman » would probably be the most accurate translation.

#### B. *The Princes Bebut'ašvili, Meliks of Tiflis*

This was a patrician house of Armenian origin tracing its descent from a certain Behbut-Kulambeg, who in 1621 was invested with the hereditary position of Melik of Tiflis by the Shah of Iran. This house thus represented the Armenian community of the Georgian capital in all its dealings with the Georgian government. In 1762 the Bebut'ašvilis were enfeoffed with the office-fief of Grand Master of the Buckhounds of Georgian and, as a result of this, as well as of its investiture with the position of melik, the house was listed among the princes of East Georgia (Georgia-Kaxet'ia) in the Russo-Georgian Treaty of 1783. The princely dignity of the Bebut'ašvilis was recognized by the Imperial Russian government under the name

<sup>84</sup> Barxudaryan, 224.

<sup>85</sup> Cited by Barxudaryan, 225.

<sup>86</sup> Barxudaryan, *ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

*Bebutov* on 21 March 1826, recognition being based both on the investiture of 1621 and on the Treaty of 1783.

The actual origin of this house is at present unknown. The granting of the title «melik» in 1621 may have simply been in keeping with the, by this time, standard use of the title by the Persians or, it may have reflected an actual connection with a melikal house of Siwnik or Karabagh or perhaps with that of Lori-Somxit'i. One indication of a relationship between the Meliks of Tiflis and those of their houses would be the existence of repeated matrimonial ties between them. Unfortunately, however, the evidence for such ties is scanty and rather late. Members of the Bebut'id house intermarried with the T'umanišvilis on several occasions and with members of various other Georgian houses (Culukije, Gurieli, Dadiani, etc.) but not until the early nineteenth century do we find an alliance with those of the other meliks. In c. 1800, Euphrosyne, daughter of Prince John (d. 1784) married «Bagar, Melik of Karabagh» who can only be Baḡir, brother of Melik P'ridon Beglarean. Thus, his title «Melik of Karabagh» may better be rendered «of the Meliks of Karabagh». Similarly, Maria (b. 1807-d. 1837), daughter of Prince Joseph Bebut'ašvili, married Xuddad Šahnazarean, last Melik of Varanda, and her sister Sophia (d. 1832) married Prince Solomon Melikov of the House of Somxit'i.

Finally, late in the nineteenth century, two sisters of this house Natalia and Maria, married, respectively, a Beglarean and a Šahnazarean. At the present time, then, a connection between the Meliks of Tiflis and the other melik houses of eastern Armenia must remain a possibility but nothing more.

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